Vampirella 1
COMIC SHOP NEWS™
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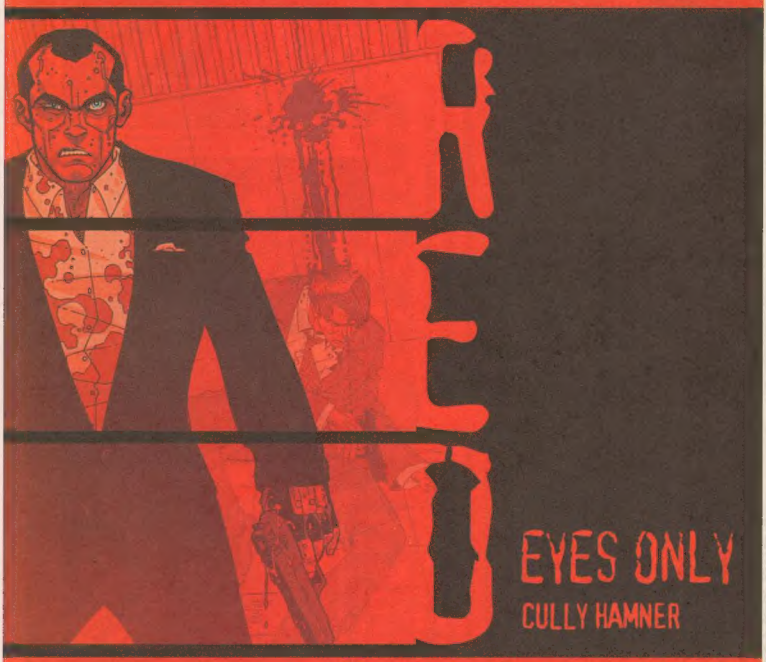

THE THRILLING TALE OF INTRIGUE AND REVENGE
IS BACK IN A NEW GRAPHIC NOVEL EDITION

WRITTEN BY WARREN ELLIS
ART BY CULLY HAMNER

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Vampirella Gets Re-Vamped

She's been missing from comic shops for a quite a while now, but that doesn't mean she's gone for good. Quite the contrary, the sensual vampire is ready to make her return this fall, courtesy of her new publisher, Dynamite.

Vampirella #1 finds Vampi hot on the trail of her greatest nemesis, Vlad Dracula. But Vlad is far from her only worry—there's something even more sinister than vampires lurking in the shadows... something that disturbs even Dracula himself.

Vampirella's Dynamite debut is written by *Eric Trautmann*, whose work has been seen in the pages of ***Action Comics, Adventure Comics, Mighty Crusaders,*** and ***Red Sonja,*** among other titles. How did Trautmann land the assignment? "Just a case of being in the right place at the right time, I suspect," Trautmann said. "I had just turned in my first issue of ***Red Sonja***, issue #51, and [editor] *Joe Rybandt* was pretty insistent that I pitch ***Vampirella*** immediately."

"We've followed Eric's career since he was on ***Action Comics***," Dynamite publisher *Nick Barrucci* added. "We respect his work. We talked, we had similar visions, and we were happy to work with him. He had the crispest, most ideal and focused overview that we reviewed."

"I know I'm not well-known for horror stories, and there's certainly a horror unpinning to ***Vampirella***, so this has been a little out of my comfort zone," Trautmann continued. "So I'm trying to do a good job and tell a good story, and to do something entertaining that I myself would enjoy reading—and hopefully other people will, too."

What led to the decision to make Vlad Dracula a major player in the first arc? "Some of that came directly from Joe and Nick—but honestly, if you want to start off a new ***Vampirella*** story with a bang, who better for her to face than the king of the vampires?"

As Trautmann explained, there's a history between Vampi and Vlad. "Vampirella and Dracula have had a longstanding animosity; if she's attempting to rid the world of the vampire threat, the conflict with Dracula is fairly straightforward. Add to that Vampirella's connection to the Van Helsing family—her tragic and doomed romantic involvement with vampire hunter Adam Van Helsing—and those ties to Dracula and his history run deep."

Vampirella may seem a surprising choice for humanity's defender, but Trautmann explained that it's actually quite understandable. "Vampirella has seen the results of a world devoured by vampires—be it the "Planet Draculon," or a realm of hell, or memory implants, depending on which version of her backstory you favor. But to her, those memories feel real, they feel true. She's witnessed a vampire plague devour an entire world, and it isn't a pretty sight. So, she's determined to prevent that catastrophe from happening here.

"I believe she quite likes humans, that she's intrigued and a little mystified by us—but she feels apart from them, too."

"I'd go even further and say that it's an intrinsic part of Vampirella's nature that she wants to protect humans," Barrucci said.

And how do humans feel about Vampirella? "That's something I hope to play up quite a bit in the first four or five issues," Trautmann said. "Humans see her—this tall, statuesque, gorgeous woman—and it triggers an instinctual revulsion or fear. She projects an aura of *other*, of *alien-ness*, and that makes it difficult for her to form any kind of friendships or personal relationships. In many ways, she's very alienated and isolated from the people she's fighting to save."

And what about this new menace that threatens both Vampirella and Vlad Dracula? "It's something impossibly ancient, and powerful enough that even Dracula fears and respects it," Trautmann said. "Of course, Vlad being Vlad, he also wants to manipulate it to his own ends."

The description of the premiere story arc refers a darker tone to the new ***Vampirella;*** what exactly does Trautmann have in the works? "Well, I'm going to avoid speaking in plot specifics, simply to avoid spoilers," the writer said. "But certainly, there's a darker, harder-edged, more street-level tone I'm attempting. We'll see a tougher, more ruthless streak to Vampirella, specifically in her combat with vampires.

"And [artist] *Wagner Reis*—particularly his backgrounds and lightning—is crafting a very realistic, plausible world for Vampirella to move through, which gives it all a tactile quality that is certainly informing the writing."

With a new series and a new direction comes a new supporting cast that "includes a young woman named Sofia, and a few of Dracula's key lieutenants (including an early 'conquest' of Vlad's, Le Fanu)," Trautmann said.

Trautmann is constructing the story so that new readers will be able to enjoy ***Vampirella*** from the first Dynamite issue. "All that readers have to know is that 'she's a vampiric creature who hunts vampires,'" he said. "The reader should have no trouble jumping on. I'm not interested in wiping out or retconning the work of the writers who came before, but I don't think it's necessary to spell out everything right off the bat, either."

"We're picking up the elements that we feel are best and important to Vampirella's canon," Barrucci said. "We want to open up stories for new readers, as well as creating entertaining stories for existing fans."

Different writers establish different "rules of vampirism" for different series--so what are the tenets of vampirism in this series, and what traditions are being tossed aside? "Vampire lore has stuck around for so long because it works," Trautmann explained. "I'm not looking to reinvent vampire mythology or anything. The basics—garlic, holy water, stakes in the heart, and so on—will be well-represented. And you can expect a lot of the action to be taking place at night.

"I doubt that many of the rank-and-file vampires—the 'newly blooded'—will be able to turn into bats or wolves, but the older, more powerful vampires may very well have expanded abilities."

In a medium that seems almost overloaded with vampires, how does Trautmann intend to make ***Vampirella*** stand out? "She won't be particularly flooded with tween romance angst, or wearing a 'Team Edward' button, I can assure you of that. Vampirella would beat the sparkles right off of Edward!

"All kidding aside, I think that, because Vampirella is such an iconic figure, she *already* stands out. So, my plan is simply to craft a smart, action-packed story for her."

"She is one of the most iconic female characters in comics, and has been for over forty years," Barrucci added, "and presenting a great story with great art is the best way to make her stand out. In addition to Eric writing and Wagner illustrating the series, we have brought in some of the best cover artists in comics to help create awareness, including *J. Scott Campbell, Alex Ross, Jelena Kevin-Djurdjevic,* and *Joe Madureira*—and the execution of the comic itself will help ***Vampirella*** stand out. "

What other new ***Vampirella*** projects are in the works? "On ***Vampirella*** we're focusing on the main series now, we'll evaluate any mini-series or crossovers as they happen," Barrucci said. "However, we don't want to do any crossovers currently—we'd rather focus on the main series."

Vampirella #1, a $3.99 comic by *Eric Trautmann & Wagner Reis,* is scheduled for November release. The first issue will feature a mix of covers by *J. Scott Campbell, Alex Ross,* and *Jelena Kevic-Djurdjevic,* with a second *Alex Ross* cover offered as a 1-in-21 variant. To see more art, visit *csnsider.com.1212.htm*.

by Cliff Biggers

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

COMIC SHOP NEWSARAMA

Produced by *Comic Shop News* in cooperation with *newsarama.com*

Angel Soars to Dark Horse

For the past three years, Dark Horse has been home to *Joss Whedon's* ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer Season Eight***—and beginning in 2011, Buffy's significant vampiric other is moving to Dark Horse as well.

"I've always regretted letting Angel go in the first place," Dark Horse senior managing editor *Scott Allie* said. "So we're really excited about getting him back, as well as all his supporting cast. It's necessary for how Joss wants to handle season nine, details of which will start spilling out in the months to come. Right now, we've got to wrap up season eight, and IDW still has a good long run of books before season nine starts."

"We've loved the half-decade of publishing the exploits of both ***Angel***, and the fan support has been truly inspiring and appreciated," IDW Chief Creative Officer *Chris Ryall* said. "The fact that steps are being taken by both companies to tie the books more closely together is something I've long wanted to do. This will not only ensure a smooth hand-off back to Dark Horse, it will also give the fans a cohesive storyline and explain some of the lingering questions they might have. While I hate to see ***Angel*** go, I know Joss has a vision for where things are headed, and I'm excited to be a part of that."

IDW's final story arc will begin in November. This closing six-issue arc, written by *David Tischman & Mariah Huehner*, will serve as a bridge to Dark Horse Comics' run, which will begin later in 2011. The title of the arc is "The Wolf, The Ram & The Heart," which should give fans a good indication of just who the final tale's "big bad" will be (longtime ***Angel*** readers are familiar with the menace of Wolfram & Hart).

IDW also has *Brian Lynch & Franco Urru's* ongoing ***Spike*** series, which furthers the coordinated storylines. Not only does ***Buffy*** "Scooby Team" member Willow appear in an upcoming issue of ***Spike***, but the series will also explain how Spike appeared in ***Buffy*** in a spaceship accompanied by giant alien bugs.

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER 35

Additionally, November's ***Illyria*** miniseries by *Scott Tipton & Elena Casagrande* will explore further ties with the two ongoing series, even as it vastly complicates the life of its title character.

"I have nothing but good memories of our time managing Angel's affairs," Ryall said. "***Angel*** was one of the first series I worked on upon joining IDW, and it introduced me to the great *David Messina*, who's gone on to tackle the sexy vampires of ***True Blood*** for us... It's truly been one of the most rewarding rides I've had at IDW. I trust that the license will be in good hands with Dark Horse.

"We've still got one last, big year to come, and we'll fight the good fight until the end. ***Angel*** wouldn't have it any other way."

Under Whedon's direction, all parties are working together for as seamless a transition as possible. The companies have been coordinating story lines in both Dark Horse's ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer Season Eight*** and IDW's ***Angel***, creating a greater sense of cohesion and cooperation to ensure that this transition is true to both ongoing story lines and to the faithful fans of both series.

In addition, Dark Horse has also confirmed that they will produce comics based on Whedon's short-lived ***Dollhouse*** series; those, too, will begin in 2011.

Look for more info on ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer Season Nine***, ***Angel***, and ***Dollhouse*** in upcoming issues of ***CSN***.

Check Off Koenig on Bluewater's Celebrity Creator List

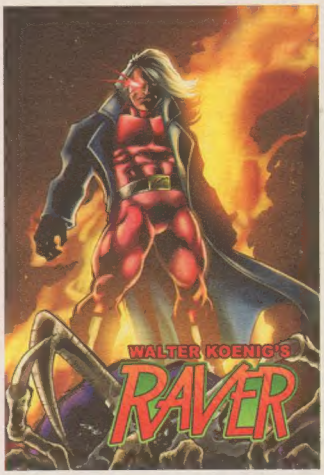
Bluewater Productions, which already offers a line of comics created by ***Star Trek*** star *William Shatner*, has landed another member of the original ***Trek*** cast: *Walter Koenig*, familiar to ***Trek*** aficionados for his portrayal of Ensign Pavel Chekov, will return to comics with a new limited series, ***Things to Come***, as well as a repackaging of his 1990s Malibu miniseries ***Raver***.

"I'm very pleased to be on board with Bluewater," Koenig said. "I anticipate an exciting professional relationship and the opportunity to tell stories with style and artistry."

Koenig explained that the new miniseries, which will feature art by *Nathan Ooten*, will present a fresh perspective on a post-apocalyptic world in which vampires are the dominant species.

"It's quite epic," Davis said. "Fans of the genre might think they have seen this premise before, but Koenig's vision for this is unique, creative and impactful. I am very excited to be a part of this project."

In addition to the four-issue release, tentatively scheduled to debut next spring, Bluewater will be repackaging Koenig's first foray into comics; a three-issue Malibu Comics series called ***Raver***. Raver follows the trials of a reality-bending hero whose psychotic episodes create a nightmare world with real villains and victims. The reprint graphic novel will pave the way for a new ***Raver*** series later in 2011.



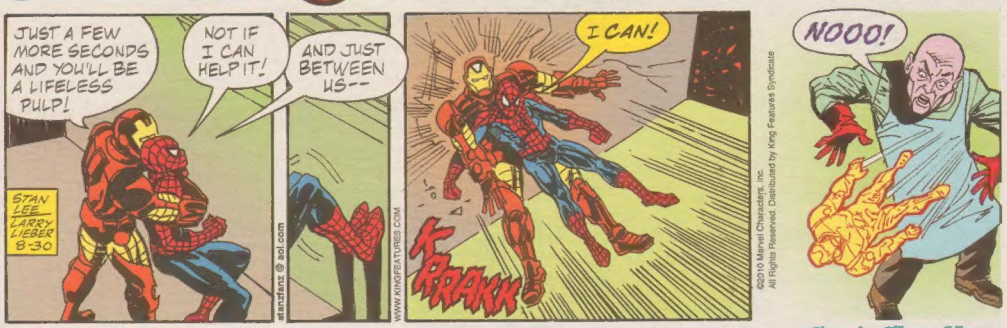
CSNsider

•Bad news, ***True Blood*** fans: DC Direct has cancelled orders for their ***True Blood: Sookie & Bill Statue***. Look for resolicitations this fall—but that means that the statues most likely won't make it into comic shops until 2011.

•Marvel is collecting the first two sold-out issues of ***Thor: Mighty Avenger*** in the bargain-priced bumper edition ***Thor: The Mighty Avenger—Double Rainbow;*** look for it on 9/22.

SPIDER-MAN

BY STAN LEE & LARRY LIEBER


JUST A FEW MORE SECONDS AND YOU'LL BE A LIFELESS PULP!
NOT IF I CAN HELP IT!
AND JUST BETWEEN US--
I CAN!
KRRAKK
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Back to Press

- ***Avengers #3 2nd Printing*** (JUL108103) in stores 9/22.
- ***Casanova #1 2nd Printing*** (JUL108107), in stores 9/22.
- ***Casanova #2 2nd Printing*** (JUL108108), in stores 9/22.
- ***Charmed #1 2nd Printing*** (JUL108109), in stores 9/22.
- ***Chew #13 2nd Printing*** (JUL108129), in stores 9/15.
- ***Marvel Universe Versus the Punisher 2nd Printing*** (JUL108105), in stores 9/22.
- ***New Avengers #2 2nd Printing*** (JUL108102), in stores 9/22.
- ***Shadowland: Daughters of the Shadow #1 2nd Printing*** (JUL108131), in stores 9/29.
- ***Shadowland: Power Man #1 2nd Printing*** (JUL108137), in stores 9/22.
- ***X-Force: Sex & Violence #2 2nd Printing*** (JUL108104), in stores 9/22.

Coming Comics—Marvel in November

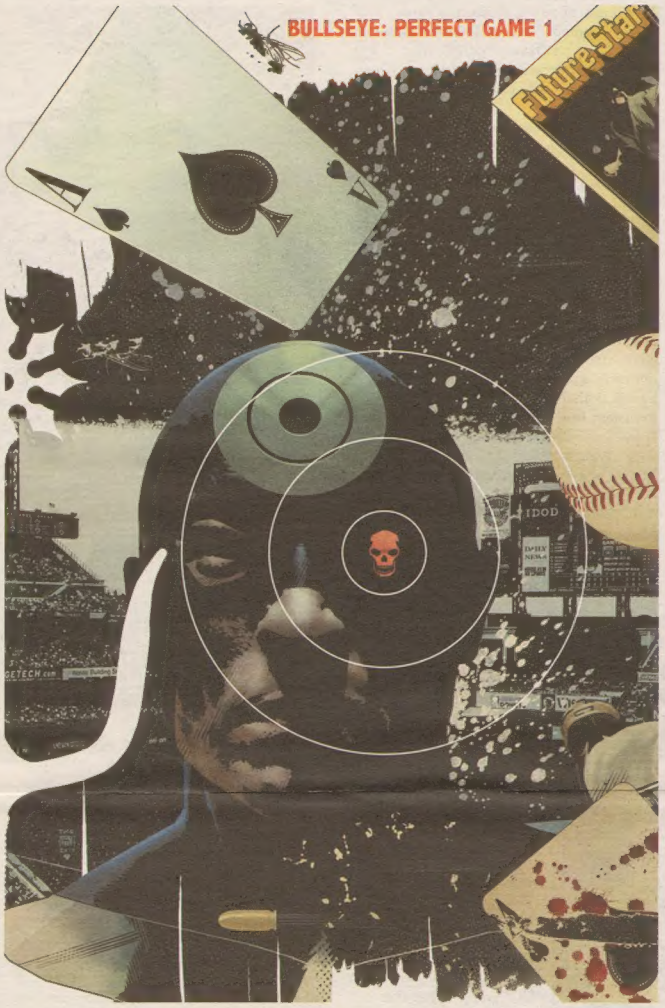
Dan Slott & Humberto Ramos launch "Big Time" in ***Amazing Spider-Man #648.*** Goodbye, Brand New Day, as big things are in store for Spidey—bigger threats, bigger guest-stars, and a big opportunity that could turn Peter Parker's life around! Which cast members are staying and who's saying goodbye? Find out as we're introduced to new characters and reintroduced to a number of Spidey villains as they make the triumphant return to the book! This issue also features an adventure of the former ARana, now the new Spider-Girl.

Ant Man Eric O'Grady joins with Wasp Henry Pym join forces in the three-issue ***Ant-Man & the Wasp*** by *Tim Seeley & Salva Espin.* Can the two men get along long enough to save the soul of the former Goliath Bill Foster?

Rob Rodi & Mike Choi pit the God of Thunder against Ego, the Living Planet in ***Astonishing Thor #1,*** the kickoff issue of a five-part series.

The search for the Scarlet Witch is finally over as the Young Avengers find Wanda in ***Avengers: The Children's Crusade #3*** by *Allan Heinberg & Jim Cheung.* But is she a hero or a villain? Is she still the Scarlet Witch? The battle over Wanda rages on as Avengers go up against the Young Avengers, Magneto clashes with Quicksilver, Wonder Man battles Wolverine, and the most powerful villain in the Marvel Universe conspires against them all so that he can possess Wanda himself.

The comic inspired an animated series—and now the animated series is inspiring a comic! ***Avengers: Earth's Mightiest Heroes #1*** launches a four-issue limited series by *Christopher Yost, Scott Wegener, & Patrick Scherberger* inspired by the new animated series.



There was a year when no one knew where he was. So what happened to Bullseye? Well, it baseball, and *Charlie Huston & Shawn Martinbrough* tell you all about it in ***Bullseye: Perfect Game #1.***

Mark Waid & Jorge Molina chronicle the rebirth of Captain America in ***Captain America: Man Out of Time.*** When the Avengers pull a mysterious, tattered soldier from the sea, they unwittingly bring back to life the Living Legend of World War Two. How will Steve Rogers, frozen in suspended animation for half a century, adapt to the world of the 21st century?

As darkness blankets the stars, only the gods of Zenn-La, homeworld of the Silver surfer, remain to oppose the Chaos King before he begins his march on the final battleground: Earth! And Earth's first line of defense against this unstoppable evil? Impossible Man!? See how it plays out in ***Chaos War: Chaos King #1*** by *Brandon Montclare & Michael Wm. Kaluta.*

Thor squares off against a foe who may be the most powerful he's ever faced—the alien god known only as Glory! This powerhouse has his sites set on helping Chaos King destroy all of reality—so what hope does a simple Thunder God have of stopping him? Find out in *J.M. DeMatteis & Brian Ching's* ***Chaos War: Thor #1.***

Original members Guardian, Vindicator, Shaman and Marina are back from the great beyond to join their team in battle larger than life or death in ***Chaos War: Alpha Flight #1*** by *Jim McCann & Reilly Brown.*

The Vision. Captain Mar-Vell. Yellowjacket. Deathcry. Swordsman. Dr. Druid. All lost their lives in the line of duty... or in disgrace. When Earth's Mightiest Heroes are themselves laid low in the carnage of the Chaos War and the graves give up their dead, these six find themselves mysteriously returned, to reassemble against the Chaos King in ***Chaos War: Dead Avengers #1*** by *Fred Van Lente & Tom Grummett.*

Just how far-reaching are the events of Shadowland? Well, *Andy Diggle & Roberto De La Torre* bring one of Marvel's oldest continuously-running titles to an end in November with ***Daredevil #512,*** and that seems pretty

IF--I HADN'T BROKEN--IRON MAN'S GRIP--
I'D HAVE BEEN--ONE SORRY ARACHNID!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 8-31
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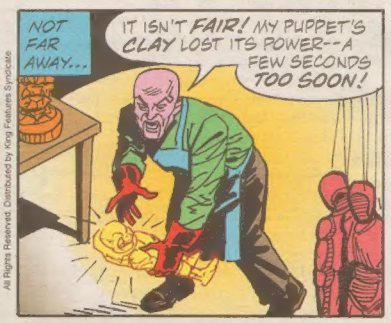

far-reaching indeed!...

The mentally handicapped, formerly mute young man known as Sheemie gets his moment in the sun in ***Dark Tower: The Gunslinger—Sheemie's Tale,*** a oneshot by *Robin Furth, Peter David, & Richard Isanove.*

What is Hawkeye's new mission? Why is Mockingbird in the Savage Land? What secret is Dominic Fortune keeping? Lots of revelations and big changes are in store in ***Hawkeye & Mockingbird #6*** by *Jim McCann & David Lopez.*

Get inside Steve Rogers' secret files as he analyzes evil from the cosmic menaces of Thanos and the Cancerverse, to the arcane might of Hela and Black Talon, to the armies of Leviathan and Hydra, to the costumed escapades of Deadpool and the White Rabbit, in ***Heroic Age: Villains,*** a 64-page handbook.

When a violent heart attack pushes the billionaire playboy and visionary inventor to the brink of death, he's not about to go down quietly. Enter Stark 2.0 – a fusion of man and machine unlike anything the world has seen before, an entity that will push its host past the brink of sanity as it attempts to recreate the world in its own image. With Stark Industries in lockdown, it's up to Stark's associates Pepper Potts and Jim Rhodes to stem a technological virus that might well contaminate the entire world. Witness the action in ***Iron Man: The Rapture,*** a two-part Marvel Knights limited series by *Alexander Irvine & Lan Medina.*

Iron Man and Thor join forces to face a menace that is both magical and technological in ***Iron Man/Thor,*** a four-part series by *Dan Abnett, Andy Lanning, & Scot Eaton.*

Marvel recreates the excitement of those bygone black-and-white magazines in the pages of ***Marvel Super Action,*** a black and white 104-page extravaganza featuring new tales of Wolverine, Shang-Chi, Iron Man, Doctor Strange, and more.

The world's most dangerous felon is in the world's top supermax-security prison—an institution so secret even the vice president doesn't know it exists. But can any cell contain Norman Osborn? Find out in the five-part ***Osborn*** by *Kelly Sue DeConnick & Emma Rios;* the first issue features a bonus backup story written by *Warren Ellis.*

Eric Shanower & Skottie Young continue their adaptation of *L. Frank Baum's* Oz tales with ***Ozma of Oz #1,*** the first issue of an eight-part limited series that follows Dorothy Gale and the talking chicken Billina as they embark on a marvelous adventure.

Frank Castle is back. Back for revenge. Back in New York. Back to cleaning its streets. Back together, healed and strong, his mission resumed. And cyber sensei Henry Russo is also back, keeping Frank proficient with an eye in the sky. Others are back as well—two of Frank's most sadistic enemies united in a new vindictive plot: Enter the Jigsaw Bothers! And you'll find 'em all in ***Punisher: In the Blood,*** a five-parter by *Rick Remender & Roland Boschi.*

Jen Walters teams up with Lyra, the new Savage She-Hulk, in ***She-Hulks #1*** by *Harrison Wilcox & Ryan Stegman.* Their mission? To bring down the Intelligencia: Klaw, Mad Thinker, Red Ghost, Trapster, and Wizard.

Spider-Girl joins the Marvel lineup courtesy of *Paul Tobin & Clayton Henry*—but this isn't the Spider-Girl you've come to know over the years. Instead, it's Anya Corazon, formerly known as Arana, who has to balance the daily grind of teenage life with the bumps and bruises brought by banging 'bows with bad guys!

Iron Man, Thor and the original Captain America guest-star in the 96-page ***Thunderbolts #150*** by *Jeff Parker & Kev Walker.* In the 40-page lead story, the Thunderbolts reach their milestone as loudly as possible, when the golden figures of the Marvel Universe come to their gray world--none other than the Armored Avenger, the God of Thunder and the Super-Soldier! Plus: character bios, key reprints and more.

Eric Masterson was the first to wield the enchanted mace called Thunderstrike and he sacrificed himself to save the world. But what happened to the mace?

Has it been lost for all eternity or does the world still need heroes? Has the time finally come for someone else to follow Eric's journey and take on the mantle of Thunderstrike? Find out in ***Thunderstrike #1*** by *Tom DeFalco, Ron Frenz, & Todd Nauck.*

Peter David & Mirco Pierfederici offer an updated visualization of the first film in ***Tron: Original Movie Adaptation,*** a two-issue miniseries.

Ultimate Comics Spider-Man returns to the legacy numbering of the original Bendis-Bagley ***Ultimate Spider-Man*** in November with ***Ultimate Comics Spider-Man #150.*** To celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Ultimate Marvelverse, *Brian Bendis* has created this triple size extravaganza as Peter Parker has made such a mess of his life as Spider-Man that the other super heroes are forced to gather together and decide once and for all what to do with the young wall crawler.

When Hope Summers returned from the future, she triggered the rebirth of the mutant gene. Five lights appeared on Cerebra and five mutants' powers came to life—but their activations have been chaotic and dangerous, nearly killing each of them. It was only the touch of Hope that saved their lives. With Rogue and the four new mutants who were gathered in ***Uncanny X-Men,*** Hope heads to Japan to join Cyclops, Wolverine, and the fifth light. But will this new light be a hero or a villain? Find out in ***Generation Hope #1*** by *Kieron Gillen & Salva Espin.*

Fables creator *Bill Willingham* makes a rare venture into Marvel territory with ***Warriors Three,*** a four-part series illustrated by *Neil Edwards.* An evil is brewing down in the depths of Hel that neither man nor god is prepared for. When an ancient monster is let loose on the world, only the Warriors Three are able to rise to the challenge!

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ULTIMATE COMICS SPIDER-MAN 150

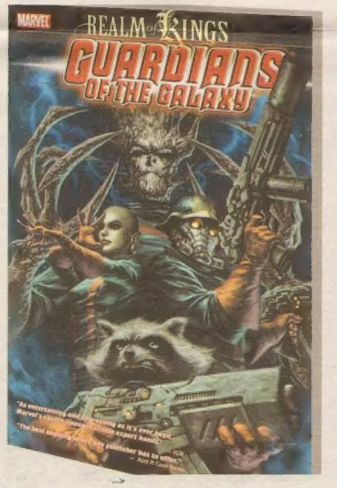
Women of Marvel #1 features a selection of short tales starring Medusa, Enchantress, the Black Cat, and Satana.

Chris Yost returns to the X-verse for ***X-Men: To Serve and Protect,*** a four-parter that pits two fan-favorite X-Men up against a major Spider-Man villain.

Marvel collected editions (advance solicited for December release) include:

- ***Amazing Spider-Man by JMS Ultimate Collection Book 5 TP,*** collecting ***Amazing Spider-Man #s 529-545*** and more.

- ***Anita Blake, Vampire Hunter: The Laughing Corpse Book 3—Executioner TP,*** collecting the five-part miniseries.
- ***Avengers/X-Men: Maximum Security TP,*** collecting 368 pages of superteam drama from the late 1990s.
- ***Agents of Atlas VS. TP,*** collecting ***X-Men vs. Agents of Atlas #s 1 & 2*** and ***Avengers vs. Atlas #s 1-4.***
- ***Avengers: The Origin HC,*** collecting the five-issue miniseries.
- ***Captain America by Jack Kirby Omnibus HC,*** collecting ***Captain America #s 193-214, Captain America Annual #s 3 & 4,*** and ***Captain America's Bicentennial Battles.***
- ***Captain America: The Bloodstone Hunt TP,*** collecting ***Captain America #s 357-364.***
- ***Captain America: The New Deal Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Captain America (2002) #s 1-6.***
- ***Captain America: Two Americas TP,*** collecting ***Captain America #s 602-605*** and ***Who Will Wield the Shield?***
- ***Daredevil by Brian Bendis & Alex Maleev Ultimate Collection Book 3 TP,*** collecting ***Daredevil #s 66-81*** and more.
- ***Deadpool: Wade Wilson's War HC,*** collecting the four-issue miniseries.
- ***Deadpool Volume 4: Monkey Business TP,*** collecting ***Deadpool #s 19-22*** and ***Hit-Monkey.***
- ***Fantastic Four by Jonathan Hickman Volume 2 TP,*** collecting ***FF #s 575-578.***
- ***Franklin Richards: Son of a Genius Ultimate Collection Book 2 GN,*** a smaller-trim-size collection of various ***Franklin Richards*** oneshots.
- ***Guardians of the Galaxy Volume 4: Realm of Kings TP,*** collecting ***Guardians of the Galaxy #s 20-25.***



- ***Incredible Hercules: The New Prince of Power TP,*** collecting ***Prince of Power #s 1-4*** and ***Fall of an Avenger #s 1 & 2.***
- ***Iron Man: War of the Iron Man Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Iron Man Legacy #s 1-5*** and more.
- ***Marvel 1602: Spider-Man TP,*** collecting the five-part miniseries.
- ***Marvel Masterworks Golden Age Mystic Comics Volume 1 HC,*** collecting ***Mystic #s 1-4.***
- ***Marvel Masterworks The Sub-Mariner Volume 4 HC,*** collecting ***Sub-Mariner #s 14-25.***
- ***Marvel Masterworks: Doctor Strange Volume 1 TP,*** collecting the *Stan Lee-Steve Ditko* tales from ***Strange Tales #s 110-111 & 114-141.***
- ***Philip K. Dick's Electric Ant Premiere HC,*** collecting the five-part adaptation.
- ***Punisher: FrankenCastle HC,*** collecting ***Dark Reign: The List—Punisher, Punisher #s 11-16, FrankenCastle #s 17-21, & Dark Wolverine #s 88-89.***
- ***Realm of Kings TP,*** collecting 368 pages of ***Realm of Kings*** cosmic drama.
- ***Siege: Battlefield TP,*** collecting ***Siege: Spider-Man, Young Avengers, Loki, Captain***

IRON MAN'S GETTING AWAY!
HE'S NOT REALLY A CRIMINAL.
SOMEONE'S CONTROLLING HIM SOMEHOW.
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 9-2
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America, & Secret Warriors.

•***Siege: Embedded TP,*** collecting the four-part limited series.

•***Siege: X-Men TP,*** collecting *Dark Wolverine #s 82-84, New Mutants #11, & Siege: Storming Asgard.*

•***Sky Doll Space Ship Premiere HC,*** collecting *Space Ship #s 1 & 2* and *Lacrima Christi #s 1 & 2.*

•***Spider-Man: The Complete Clone Saga Epic Book 4 TP,*** collecting 480 pages of 1990's clone saga by *Tom DeFalco, J.M. DeMatteis, Mark Bagley,* and others.

•***Spider-Man Noir: Eyes Without a Face GN,*** a smaller-trim-size paperback edition of the four-part series.

•***Spider-Man: One Moment in Time Premiere HC,*** collecting *Amazing Spider-Man #s 638-641.*

•***Spider-Man: The Osborn Identity TP,*** collecting *American Son #s 1-4* and more.

•***Supreme Power: Hyperion TP,*** collecting the five-part series by *J. Michael Straczynski, Dan Jurgens, & Staz Johnson.*

•***Thor: Across All Worlds TP,*** collecting *Thor (1998) #s 26-35.*

•***Thor by Dan Jurgens & John Romita JR. Volume 4 TP,*** collecting *Thor #s 18-25 & Annual 2000.*

•***Thor: Godstorm HC,*** collecting the miniseries and more, by *Kurt Busiek, Tom DeFalco, Steve Rude, & Mike Mignola.*

•***Thor & Loki: Blood Brothers HC,*** collecting *Loki #s 1-4* and more.

•***Thor: Siege Aftermath TP,*** collecting *Thor #s 611-614* and more.

•***Thor: The Quest for Odin Premiere HC,*** collecting *Thor (1966) #s 255-266.*

•***Ultimate Comics Spider-Man Volume 2: Chameleons Premiere HC,*** collecting *Ultimate Spider-Man #s 7-14.*

CSNsights

Reviews by Cliff Biggers

Superman #701 & 702

J. Michael Straczynski (W); Eddy Barrows & J.P. Mayer (A)

(DC, *$2.99@*)

To anyone who says, "I'm just not a Superman fan," I say "You just haven't read the right Superman stories."

These tales by *J. Michael Straczynski & Eddy Barrows* are the right Superman stories.

After an overlong run of Superman-off-Earth stories of cosmic drama and Kryptonian intrigue, JMS's run reminds us that the Kryptonian half of the Man of Steel is just that—half. The other component of Superman's personality is his human heritage. That's the side that these stories explore as we follow Superman on his walk across the United States.

When I first heard about this storyline, I feared that we'd get a superhero *Forrest Gump.* Instead, what we get is the most powerful hero on Earth putting his powers on the back burner as he uses his compassion, his intellect, and his human nature to solve the various problems that he confronts during his odyssey.

Superman #701 has not a single fight in the entire issue. ***Superman #702*** has only one, and it's brief and pointless, as Superman himself points out to his foes.

This is Superman seen through Frank Capra's eyes—a man possessed of incredible powers who realizes that he can only be successful if he acknowledges the *man* as well as the powers.

Most memorable passage: a former factory worker's paean to America's one-time role as an industrial powerhouse; it's powerful, poignant, and pertinent in today's era of economic turbulence.

These are the Superman stories people will remember fondly years from now, and rightly so.

Grade - A+

The Green Hornet Strikes #1

Brett Matthews (W); Ariel Padilla (A)

(Dynamite, $3.99)

I'm having a great time with Dynamite's comic book adaptation of *Kevin Smith's Green Hornet* film script, but ***The Green Hornet Strikes*** does an even better job of updating the Green Hornet concept.

While Smith brings the Green Hornet into the present, Matthews takes the Hornet into the near future with a story that intercuts between the demise of one Hornet and the birth of another. I only wish that we had learned a little bit more about the post-Hornet years of John Reid; as the link between the two generations of heroes, he deserves more a more prominent role.

Padilla's updated design for the new Hornet is also quite appealing; it updates the look of the character while using a retro element (the bug-eyed gas mask) to acknowledge the character's history.

The appeal of ***Kevin Smith's Green Hornet*** is, of course, Smith himself—but the appeal of ***The Green Hornet Strikes*** is the synergy of a revamped classic character and a dystopian near-future milieu that's tailor-made for a character of this sort.

Grade - B+

S.H.I.E.L.D. #s 1-3

Jonathan Hickman (W); Dustin Weaver (A)

(Marvel, $3.99@)

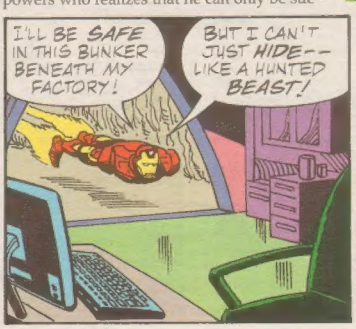
Think "Dan Brown meets the Marvel Universe" and you have some idea what you can expect from this far-reaching, history-rewriting series that transforms a one-time espionage agency into humanity's last line of defense.

Leonardo da Vinci, Isaac Newton, Imhotep, Galileo, Nostradamus—they're in here, along with many others, and the common link is that they have all saved humanity from malevolence of unprecedented power. The Brood, the Celestials, Galactus... did you ever wonder why they waited until the dawning of the superhero age to attack Earth? Well, it turns out that they didn't!

S.H.I.E.L.D. begins in 1953, following a young man named Leonid as he is introduced to the secret organization by agents Nathaniel Richards and Howard Stark (and you can guess who their sons are, can't you?). As he is drawn into the organization, he discovers a problematic link between his father and S.H.I.E.L.D.

Secret organization, hidden history, global conspiracies—put 'em together and they make ***S.H.I.E.L.D.*** one of Marvel's most compelling reads.

Grade - A


I'LL BE SAFE IN THIS BUNKER BENEATH MY FACTORY!
BUT I CAN'T JUST HIDE-- LIKE A HUNTED BEAST!
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Magnus, Robot Fighter #1

Jim Shooter (W); Bill Reinhold (A)

(Dark Horse, $3.50)

"Tarzan of the Robots" is back in a new series that not only borrows heavily from the original *Magnus*, but also borrows the mastermind responsible for Valiant's 1990s *Magnus* relaunch, *Jim Shooter*. Shooter reintroduces readers to the young man raised by Robot 1A to defend humanity against robot evil in a series that's designed to be very new-reader-friendly.

While the original *Magnus #1* (which is reprinted in the first issue of the new series) drew its inspiration from *The Time Machine*, presenting a future in which humans have become soft and dependent on the robots who do everything for them, this relaunch has more in common with *Tim Truman's Hawkworld*, with its view of a human "upper class" (literally!) who live in the towering buildings of the sprawling NorthAm, while the overlooked residents of the lower levels struggle to survive.

Shooter's not using *Magnus* as a means to comment on contemporary class struggles, however; his goal is to tell a fast-paced, high-energy story that harkens back to the more compressed storytelling of the 1960s and 1970s, and he does that perfectly.

The weakest aspect of the first issue is that there's too little sense of wonder in *Magnus*'s back story. Perhaps that will develop as the residents of NorthAm become more aware of Magnus and his abilities...

It's good to see *Magnus* return, and it's even better to see *Jim Shooter* back in charge of a character he obviously loves.

Grade - B

Ultimates 3 #1

Mark Millar (W); Steve Dillon (A)

(Marvel, $3.99)

Hey, everyone loves vampires, right? They rake in millions in movie theaters; they take a bite out of the best-sellers list; they star in HBO's most buzzworthy series.

But this series reminds us that vampires really don't belong in superhero comics.

Mark Millar pits the Ultimate Blade against vampires in an overly brutal beginning sequence that owes more to Vertigo (where artist *Steve Dillon* first made his mark) than to Marvel-style superhero adventure. From there, the story deteriorates as it attempts to blend the Ultimate

Daredevil's origin with a vampiric reworking of the whole Marvel Zombies motif.

Back in the 1980s, Marvel so overused the whole vampire thing that they felt obligated to put a moratorium on the bloodsuckers in the Marvel Universe. Too bad that the moratorium didn't continue...

Well, at least the Dillon art looks good—and it's obvious that he'd do a great Daredevil solo series.

Grade - D

Life With Archie—The Married Life #1

Michael Uslan (W); Norm Breyfogle, Andrey Pepoy, Joe Rubinstein (A)

(Archie, $3.99)

Last year's superb "Road Not Taken" storyline paves the way for a new ongoing monthly title that features two separate stories in each issue—one in which Archie and Veronica are married, the other in which it's Archie and Betty who've tied the knot.

Readers who grew up with the simple joys of Archie's high school misadventures are the target audience for this title, with its thought-provoking glimpses of two different realities. *The Married Life* blends familiar characters and less familiar themes—financial responsibilities, marital complexities, real-world challenges.

Even more thought provoking, the book throws in a reference to parallel universes,

followed by a page filled with alternate realities depicting the various Archie eras and concepts—thereby making this series just as integral to the Archie canon as *Little Archie*, the 1940s classic tales, or today's teenaged Riverdale gang. Ultimately, Dilton becomes Archie's version of The Watcher, the man who knows about all the realities... just like us!

This series reminds me of *Tom Batiuk's* superb work in *Funky Winkerbean*, a former high school humor strip that has matured into a complex serio-comic look at the complexities of contemporary adulthood. Like Funky and crew, the Riverdale gang becomes even more engaging as they mature and face adult worries over careers, romance, and finances, among other challenges.

(If Archie wanted to make *The Married Life* even better, they could toss out the *Tiger-Beat*-esque cover design and the teen-oriented celebrity photos on the cover; it seems contrary to the mature themes found within this thought-provoking magazine.)

Grade - A+

Doc Savage #s 1-4

Paul Malmont (W); Howard Porter & Art Thibert (A)

(DC $3.99@)

Doc Savage, adventure fiction's first periodical superhero (his pulp run predates *Action #1* by a half-decade), seems like a character tailor-made for comics.

Paul Malmont, the author of the superlative Lester Dent-meets-Walter Gibson quasi-pulp novel *The Chinatown Death Cloud Peril*, seems like the perfect writer for an ongoing *Doc Savage* comic book.

Perception doesn't always match reality, unfortunately.

While Malmont knows his pulp history and can construct a solid yarn, he seems out of place in comics; his storytelling advances in fits and starts, lacking a narrative flow and a sense of pacing that are essential in comics.

And *Howard Porter*, who's quite capable when it comes to illustrating superheroes, seems out of place when it comes to drawing people in normal street clothes—and when you're telling non-costumed adventures, that's a real problem.

Doc Savage got off on the wrong foot with its first story arc, unfortunately. The good news is that DC realized that, so they've enlisted *Brian Azzarello* (writer of the excellent *First Wave*, which also features Doc Savage), *Ivan Brandon, & Nic Klein* to get the book back on track. So if you dropped *Doc* after these lackluster issues, you might want to give the series a second try.

Grade - D

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WHAT HAPPENED TO ME? WHY DID I TRY TO HARM YOU?
THAT'S WHAT WE'VE GOTTA FIND OUT!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 9-4
I--USED TO BE--A SUPERHERO!
NOW--I'M A FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE!
Colors: Ward Batty
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